



24 March 2014

Mr Ian Rickuss MP  
Chair  
Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Via email: [AREC@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:AREC@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Mr Rickuss

### **Inquiry into Environmental Offsets Bill 2014**

Thank you for this latest opportunity to provide input on behalf of the mid-tier producers, emerging miners and explorers into the Environmental Offsets Bill 2013, before the Queensland Parliament.

The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC) is the largest peak industry body for mineral exploration and mining companies within Australia. The membership of AMEC comprises over 320 explorers, emerging miners and the companies servicing them; many are based or have operations in Queensland.

AMEC's strategic objective is to secure an environment that provides clarity and certainty for mineral exploration and mining in Australia in a commercially, socially and environmentally responsible manner.

Environmental policy is of obvious concern for exploration and mining companies, as they seek to balance cost-effectiveness and environmentally responsible methods for operating. The current state of Queensland's environmental offsets policy is simply confusing, antiquated and an impediment to economic development in the State.

The Environmental Offsets Bill does appear to solve several of the issues that AMEC have posed during the consultations with the Department of Environment and Heritage Protections. AMEC supports the harmonisation of the current five offsets policies to appear in one Bill.

Further to this, the opportunity to flexibility in the delivery of offsets for any significant residual impacts from activities is a positive development. To allow proponent-led solutions that fulfil the environmental conditions placed on a project is a clear case of risk-based legislation that harnesses the innovation of the private sector.

AMEC notes that the intention of the Bill is to reduce duplication between both Federal and local government with regards to offsets. For proponents that are subject to offset liabilities under the Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC), this objective is of particular

### **Association of Mining and Exploration Companies**

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interest. AMEC seeks assurance that the proposed assessments processes will satisfy the criteria to accommodate areas of National Environmental Significance.

AMEC has noted there are limits to being able to fully assess the impacts of the new Environmental Offsets Bill, without the accompanying Regulations or a fully published policy. However, in the current form the Environmental Offsets Bill appears to satisfy the requests from AMEC for increased transparency and reduction in bureaucracy in Queensland.

AMEC looks forward to further discussions on the review of the Environmental Offsets Bill, and the forthcoming Regulations. If you have any queries in relation to the above comments please do not hesitate to contact me or AMEC Regional Manager Bernie Hogan of [bernie.hogan@amec.org.au](mailto:bernie.hogan@amec.org.au) or 0402142367.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Bennison', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Simon Bennison**  
Chief Executive Officer